

Lent 2023 | Reflect. Repent. Restore

40 Days of Fasting & Prayer Guide

February 22, 2023 (Ash Wednesday) – April 9, 2023 (Easter Sunday)

5th Week (3/19-3/25): Rejoice in Jesus' victory on your behalf

DAY 26

3/19 (Sun)

Biblical Readings:

2 Corinthians 5:16-21

¹⁶ So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Reflection:

“Lent reminds us that to be satisfied, to say you are okay and without need of help, you have to close your eyes and shut your ears to the bad news of sin that somehow confronts you every day. Lent welcomes you to bring a dissatisfied heart to your Redeemer, one who has seen and accepted the bad news, and to reach out for the help that he alone is able to give. Only those who willingly receive the bad news will then seek and celebrate the good news. Are you too easily satisfied?” (Paul David. Tripp, “*Journey to the Cross*”, p152-153)

Prayer:

Slowly read and pray through 2 Corinthians 5:16-21. How would these verses change your life if you let them inform your mess and brokenness?

DAY 27

3/20 (Mon)

Biblical Readings:

Acts 3:17-20

¹⁷ “Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. ¹⁸ But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer. ¹⁹ Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, ²⁰ and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus.

Reflection:

1. What are some of your biggest regrets in life? As you answer this question, do you consider spiritual regrets first, or as an afterthought?
2. Which of the regret listed do you most resonate with?
(Paul David. Tripp, “*Journey to the Cross*”, p157)

Prayer :

Slowly read and pray through *Acts 3:17-20*, and let it refresh your heart as you repent and receive God’s forgiveness.

DAY 28

3/21 (Tue)

Biblical Readings:

Jesus the Great High Priest

Hebrews 4:14-16

¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. ¹⁶ Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Reflection:

“Since sin is never defeated by denial and since confession is the doorway to getting help that really helps, fight fear and discouragement by reading Hebrews 4:14–16 over and over again. Commit it to memory. Keep reminding yourself that you don’t need to be afraid, because your Savior is tenderhearted. And you don’t need to be discouraged, because he has what it takes to defeat what has left you discouraged.” (Paul David. Tripp, “*Journey to the Cross*”, p163)

Prayer:

Slowly read and pray through *Hebrews 4:14-16*, memorize it, and let it help you in your struggle against sin.

DAY 29

3/22 (Wed)

Biblical Readings:

The Suffering and Glory of the Servant

Reread Isaiah 53

53

Who has believed our message

and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?

² *He grew up before him like a tender shoot,
and like a root out of dry ground.*

*He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.*

³ *He was despised and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering.
Like one from whom men hide their faces
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.*

⁴ *Surely he took up our infirmities
and carried our sorrows,
yet we considered him stricken by God,
smitten by him, and afflicted.*

⁵ *But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was upon him,
and by his wounds we are healed.*

⁶ *We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to his own way;
and the LORD has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.*

⁷ *He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;
he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before her shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.*

⁸ *By oppression and judgment he was taken away.
And who can speak of his descendants?
For he was cut off from the land of the living;
for the transgression of my people he was stricken.*

⁹ *He was assigned a grave with the wicked,
and with the rich in his death,
though he had done no violence,
nor was any deceit in his mouth.*

¹⁰ *Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer,
and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering,
he will see his offspring and prolong his days,
and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand.*

¹¹ *After the suffering of his soul,
he will see the light of life and be satisfied;
by his knowledge my righteous
servant will justify many,
and he will bear their iniquities.*

¹² *Therefore I will give him a portion among the great,
and he will divide the spoils with the strong,
because he poured out his life unto death,
and was numbered with the transgressors.
For he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession for the transgressors.*

Reflection:

“This is what your Savior was appointed to do. This was his redemptive job description. This was the only way for forgiveness to be granted, eternal life to be given, righteousness to be granted, acceptance with God to be guaranteed, and saving grace to be unleashed. He came willingly, and did it all without the faintest grumble or the smallest complaint. Jesus knew that his suffering would be temporary but the fruit would be eternal, and he was willing. During this Lenten season, stop and consider the depth of the love of your Lord, that he endured this for you. He suffered the unthinkable so we could experience the unreachable. Now that’s amazing grace!” (Paul David. Tripp, *“Journey to the Cross”*, p169)

Prayer:

Slowly reread *Isaiah 53*, and meditate on all that Christ did for you.

DAY 30

3/23 (Thurs)

Biblical Readings:

Mark 14:1-15:39

14 *Now the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were only two days away, and the chief priests and the teachers of the law were looking for some sly way to arrest Jesus and kill him. ² “But not during the Feast,” they said, “or the people may riot.”*

³ *While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.*

⁴ *Some of those present were saying indignantly to one another, “Why this waste of perfume? ⁵ It could have been sold for more than a year’s wages and the money given to the poor.” And they rebuked her harshly.*

⁶ *“Leave her alone,” said Jesus. “Why are you bothering her? She has done a beautiful thing to me. ⁷ The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want. But you will not always have me. ⁸ She did what she could. She poured perfume on my body beforehand to prepare for my burial. ⁹ I tell you the truth, wherever the gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.”*

¹⁰ *Then Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus to them. ¹¹ They were delighted to hear this and promised to give him money. So he watched for an opportunity to hand him over.*

The Lord’s Supper

¹² On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go and make preparations for you to eat the Passover?"

¹³ So he sent two of his disciples, telling them, "Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him. ¹⁴ Say to the owner of the house he enters, 'The Teacher asks: Where is my guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?'" ¹⁵ He will show you a large upper room, furnished and ready. Make preparations for us there."

¹⁶ The disciples left, went into the city and found things just as Jesus had told them. So they prepared the Passover.

¹⁷ When evening came, Jesus arrived with the Twelve. ¹⁸ While they were reclining at the table eating, he said, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me—one who is eating with me."

¹⁹ They were saddened, and one by one they said to him, "Surely not I?"

²⁰ "It is one of the Twelve," he replied, "one who dips bread into the bowl with me. ²¹ The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born."

²² While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body."

²³ Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it.

²⁴ "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them. ²⁵ "I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God."

²⁶ When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

²⁷ "You will all fall away," Jesus told them, "for it is written:

" 'I will strike the shepherd,
and the sheep will be scattered. '

²⁸ But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

²⁹ Peter declared, "Even if all fall away, I will not."

³⁰ "I tell you the truth," Jesus answered, "today—yes, tonight—before the rooster crows twice you yourself will disown me three times."

³¹ But Peter insisted emphatically, "Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you." And all the others said the same.

Gethsemane

³² They went to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." ³³ He took Peter, James and John along with him, and he began to be deeply distressed and troubled. ³⁴ "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death," he said to them. "Stay here and keep watch."

³⁵ Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. ³⁶ "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

³⁷ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Simon,” he said to Peter, “are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour?” ³⁸ Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”

³⁹ Once more he went away and prayed the same thing. ⁴⁰ When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him.

⁴¹ Returning the third time, he said to them, “Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴² Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!”

Jesus Arrested

⁴³ Just as he was speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, appeared. With him was a crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests, the teachers of the law, and the elders.

⁴⁴ Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard.” ⁴⁵ Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Rabbi!” and kissed him. ⁴⁶ The men seized Jesus and arrested him. ⁴⁷ Then one of those standing near drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

⁴⁸ “Am I leading a rebellion,” said Jesus, “that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? ⁴⁹ Every day I was with you, teaching in the temple courts, and you did not arrest me. But the Scriptures must be fulfilled.” ⁵⁰ Then everyone deserted him and fled.

⁵¹ A young man, wearing nothing but a linen garment, was following Jesus. When they seized him, ⁵² he fled naked, leaving his garment behind.

Before the Sanhedrin

⁵³ They took Jesus to the high priest, and all the chief priests, elders and teachers of the law came together. ⁵⁴ Peter followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. There he sat with the guards and warmed himself at the fire.

⁵⁵ The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death, but they did not find any. ⁵⁶ Many testified falsely against him, but their statements did not agree.

⁵⁷ Then some stood up and gave this false testimony against him: ⁵⁸ “We heard him say, ‘I will destroy this man-made temple and in three days will build another, not made by man.’ ” ⁵⁹ Yet even then their testimony did not agree.

⁶⁰ Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus, “Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?” ⁶¹ But Jesus remained silent and gave no answer.

Again the high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?”

⁶² “I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.”

⁶³ The high priest tore his clothes. “Why do we need any more witnesses?” he asked. ⁶⁴ “You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?”

They all condemned him as worthy of death. ⁶⁵ Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, “Prophecy!” And the guards took him and beat him.

Peter Disowns Jesus

⁶⁶ While Peter was below in the courtyard, one of the servant girls of the high priest came by. ⁶⁷ When she saw Peter warming himself, she looked closely at him.

“You also were with that Nazarene, Jesus,” she said.

⁶⁸ But he denied it. “I don’t know or understand what you’re talking about,” he said, and went out into the entryway.

⁶⁹ When the servant girl saw him there, she said again to those standing around, “This fellow is one of them.” ⁷⁰ Again he denied it.

After a little while, those standing near said to Peter, “Surely you are one of them, for you are a Galilean.”

⁷¹ He began to call down curses on himself, and he swore to them, “I don’t know this man you’re talking about.”

⁷² Immediately the rooster crowed the second time. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken to him: “Before the rooster crows twice you will disown me three times.” And he broke down and wept.

Jesus Before Pilate

15 Very early in the morning, the chief priests, with the elders, the teachers of the law and the whole Sanhedrin, reached a decision. They bound Jesus, led him away and handed him over to Pilate.

² “Are you the king of the Jews?” asked Pilate.

“Yes, it is as you say,” Jesus replied.

³ The chief priests accused him of many things. ⁴ So again Pilate asked him, “Aren’t you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of.”

⁵ But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed.

⁶ Now it was the custom at the Feast to release a prisoner whom the people requested. ⁷ A man called Barabbas was in prison with the insurrectionists who had committed murder in the uprising. ⁸ The crowd came up and asked Pilate to do for them what he usually did.

⁹ “Do you want me to release to you the king of the Jews?” asked Pilate, ¹⁰ knowing it was out of envy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him. ¹¹ But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have Pilate release Barabbas instead.

¹² “What shall I do, then, with the one you call the king of the Jews?” Pilate asked them.

¹³ “Crucify him!” they shouted.

¹⁴ “Why? What crime has he committed?” asked Pilate.

But they shouted all the louder, “Crucify him!”

¹⁵ Wanting to satisfy the crowd, Pilate released Barabbas to them. He had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified.

The Soldiers Mock Jesus

¹⁶ The soldiers led Jesus away into the palace (that is, the Praetorium) and called together the whole company of soldiers. ¹⁷ They put a purple robe on him, then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on him. ¹⁸ And they began to call out to him, “Hail, king of the Jews!” ¹⁹ Again and again they struck him on the head with a staff and spit on him. Falling on their knees, they paid homage to him. ²⁰ And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

The Crucifixion

²¹ A certain man from Cyrene, Simon, the father of Alexander and Rufus, was passing by on his way in from the country, and they forced him to carry the cross. ²² They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means The Place of the Skull). ²³ Then they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it. ²⁴ And they crucified him. Dividing up his clothes, they cast lots to see what each would get.

²⁵ It was the third hour when they crucified him. ²⁶ The written notice of the charge against him read: THE KING OF THE JEWS. ²⁷ They crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left. ²⁹ Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, “So! You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, ³⁰ come down from the cross and save yourself!”

³¹ In the same way the chief priests and the teachers of the law mocked him among themselves. “He saved others,” they said, “but he can’t save himself! ³² Let this Christ, this King of Israel, come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.” Those crucified with him also heaped insults on him.

The Death of Jesus

³³ At the sixth hour darkness came over the whole land until the ninth hour. ³⁴ And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?”—which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

³⁵ When some of those standing near heard this, they said, “Listen, he’s calling Elijah.”

³⁶ One man ran, filled a sponge with wine vinegar, put it on a stick, and offered it to Jesus to drink. “Now leave him alone. Let’s see if Elijah comes to take him down,” he said.

³⁷ With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last.

³⁸ The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. ³⁹ And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, “Surely this man was the Son of God!”

Reflection:

1. How much of your prayer time is devoted to confession? Are you satisfied with that?
2. What could you do to make your times of confession more specific and meaningful?
3. How might meditating on Christ’s sacrifice change your confession?

(Paul David. Tripp, “Journey to the Cross”, p174)

Prayer:

Slowly read and pray through the passion account in *Mark 14:1-15:39*, picturing the scene as if for the first time, and let it lead you into a time of confession.

DAY 31

3/24 (Fri)

Biblical Readings:

Freedom From Human Regulations Through Life With Christ

Colossians 2:6-15

⁶ So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, ⁷ rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

⁸ See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

⁹ For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, ¹⁰ and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. ¹¹ In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

¹³ When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, ¹⁴ having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. ¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Reflection:

“I leave you with Paul’s crescendo sentence: “He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him” (Col. 2:15). On the cross, Jesus was robbing the enemy of its weapons. As Jesus was on the cross, the enemy was being put to shame. The cross was a triumph. Sin defeated. Forgiveness granted. Acceptance with God assured. Eternal life guaranteed. Victory now and in the world to come. This is your identity. Now go live it out.” (Paul David. Tripp, “*Journey to the Cross*”, p178)

Prayer:

Slowly read and pray through *Colossians 2:6-15*, and rejoice in Jesus’ victory on your behalf.

DAY 32**3/25 (Sat)****Biblical Readings:*****Favoritism Forbidden******James 2:1-13***

2 My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don’t show favoritism. ² Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. ³ If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, “Here’s a good seat for you,” but say to the poor man, “You stand there” or “Sit on the floor by my feet,” ⁴ have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

⁵ Listen, my dear brothers: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? ⁶ But you have insulted the poor. Is it not the rich who are exploiting you? Are they not the ones who are dragging you into court? ⁷ Are they not the ones who are slandering the noble name of him to whom you belong?

⁸ *If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing right. ⁹ But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. ¹¹ For he who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.*

¹² *Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, ¹³ because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!*

Reflection:

“As the greatest one who ever lived was willingly marching to a criminal’s death, those journeying with him were questing to be great. I wish I could say that I can’t relate, but I can. I sadly share this heart, and so do you. I like to be the center of attention. I like to have the strongest argument. I like to be in control. As long as sin still lives inside me, I will still have moments when I want to be great, and when I do, I demonstrate how much I need the grace of this glorious and powerful one, who did not save himself but willingly died to save people like me from myself. On the road to the cross, not only the heart of Jesus is exposed, but ours is too, and there’s grace for everything that gets exposed.” (Paul David. Tripp, *“Journey to the Cross”*, p186)

Prayer:

Slowly read and pray through James 2:1-13. What is the contrast between the human heart and the heart of the Messiah?